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CIA 4 Cuba (USSR)

Kill SALT hearing pending answers on Soviet in Cuba

By BRUCE DRAKE

Washington (News Bureau). — Sen. Frank Church (D. Idaho), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, yesterday canceled a scheduled meeting of his committee, which was to have dealt with the SALT-2 pact with the Soviet Union, because of strong concern over the presence of Soviet combat troops in Cuba.

Church announced late in the afternoon that the committee instead would meet in closed session with officials of the Carter administration to determine what the President intends to do about

the matter of Soviet combat soldiers only 90 miles from the shores of the United States.

Church, a liberal who is counted among SALT-2's supporters, took today's treaty hearing off the schedule because, he said, the new Cuban-Soviet development "demands the committee's immediate attention."

Hard-line stance

Church has taken a hard line on the troop flap ever since last week, when he was quoted from Idaho as saying it might adversely affect the ratification chances of the SALT-2. Church is facing strong conservative opposition in his state's 1980 elections.

"The U.S. cannot permit the Soviets to establish a military base on Cuban soil," Church said, "nor can we allow Cuba to be used as a springboard for real or threatened military intervention in the Western Hemisphere."

Church had returned early to Washington from Idaho when he learned that the State Department had confirmed the presence of Soviet troops in Cuba. On Monday, he consulted with Secretary of State Vance, and he was expected to talk with Carter by telephone yesterday.

Conferences planned

The Senate panel will meet behind closed doors this morning with Stansfield Turner, director of central intelligence, and other intelligence officials and then will confer in the afternoon with Vance to "see what action Carter intends to take," Church said.

Earlier, former United Nations Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, at a Capitol Hill press conference, said it would be wrong for treaty opponents to use the flap over the Soviet troops as an argument against SALT-2.